

# THE BELFRY

NUMBER THIRTY SIX

SUMMER 2008



Balquhiddar Glen with views of Loch Voil

Picture taken by Paul Holt

## FROM THE MANSE

In this issue of the Belfry there is an article about Dr Stewart who was minister at Balquhider in the late 18th century. It is interesting to read that his concerns about weddings are much the same as those we have today.

In a recent article by a highland minister I was reminded of days long ago when weddings were held in the drawing room of the manse. Customs change and we welcome couples from near and far who make their vows to one another, in the presence of God, in Balquhider Church. Then, as now, the celebrations which followed were often held in the village hall. After all the hard work of the last decade rebuilding the village hall in Balquhider it is heartening to see it used for just such a purpose.

Village halls of course are a relatively modern phenomena, and further back in time it was the farm steading which was used for the celebrations. In some parts of the highlands the dance was held on the road - *danns' an rathaid*. In recent years I have attended wedding celebrations held in the family steading, the barn having been specially decorated for the occasion.

Perhaps we have become too elaborate in our celebrations, perhaps the old ways are better. I doubt whether there was an elaborate ceremony, or an expensive celebration when Adam and Eve were married. There were no parents to foot the bill and no brothers, sisters, aunts, cousins to invite.

I haven't yet worked out where Adam's sons found their wives, but I do believe that marriage is a God given ordinance as old as creation. God simply gave Eve to Adam, and they were married. After "the Fall" their faults became apparent, but they worked at their marriage and stayed together.

I hope and pray that after our modern weddings, the couples who make their vows at the church will put at least as much time and energy into making their marriages a success as they did in planning that one special day.

Back to Dr Stewart - perhaps he would be happy today - couples no longer stand on the Angus Stone in the belief that it will bring them good luck and fertility. For the last century the Angus stone has stood upright against the wall of the church and the couple would have to defy gravity to stand upon its face.

Which brings me to St Angus' Day. This year it falls on Wednesday 13th August. On that day we will be displaying some historic items associated with the church including Bedell's Old Testament (1688) in classical Irish and Robert Kirk's transliteration of the New Testament (first published in 1690). This is a rare opportunity to see these items as they are normally kept in the bank. At 6.00 pm there will be a short bilingual service with hymns in English and Gaelic. Afterwards there will be refreshments available and at 7.30 pm we will hold the "Friends" AGM.

If you are able to come along and take part you will be most welcome. *Beannaich dhuibh uile ...*

John Lincoln

Minister - Balquhider linked with Killin and Ardeonaig

**CHURCH SERVICES**  
**Balquhider, Lochearnhead & Strathyre**  
**CHURCH OF SCOTLAND**  
**Balquhider Parish Kirk**  
Every Sunday at 12 noon  
Minister: Rev John Lincoln

## FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Friends

I recently came across some interesting reading on the internet, and was fascinated to discover a research group, hailing from all over the world, working on the genealogy of our area. I thought it would be of interest to our readers to include extracts of their work and here is a short description of the group.

The Stewarts of Balquhider Research Group is an internet-based genealogical research group founded in 2002 by Rev. Ryk Brown, a Presbyterian minister from Ontario, Canada, and Chuck Speed, a retired Human Resources Director from Texas, USA. The group presently consists of about 50 researchers from all over the world including: Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, China and the UK. The members all descend from Sir William Stewart, Royal Ballie of Balquhider in 1488 and are kin of the Stewarts who still reside at Ardvorlich to this day.

Please do check out their website and see the great work they are doing.

For more information go to: <http://www.chuckspeed.com/balquhider/balquhider%20stewarts.html>

Please send any articles, or notes of information to: [mal@rosebankhouse.co.uk](mailto:mal@rosebankhouse.co.uk)



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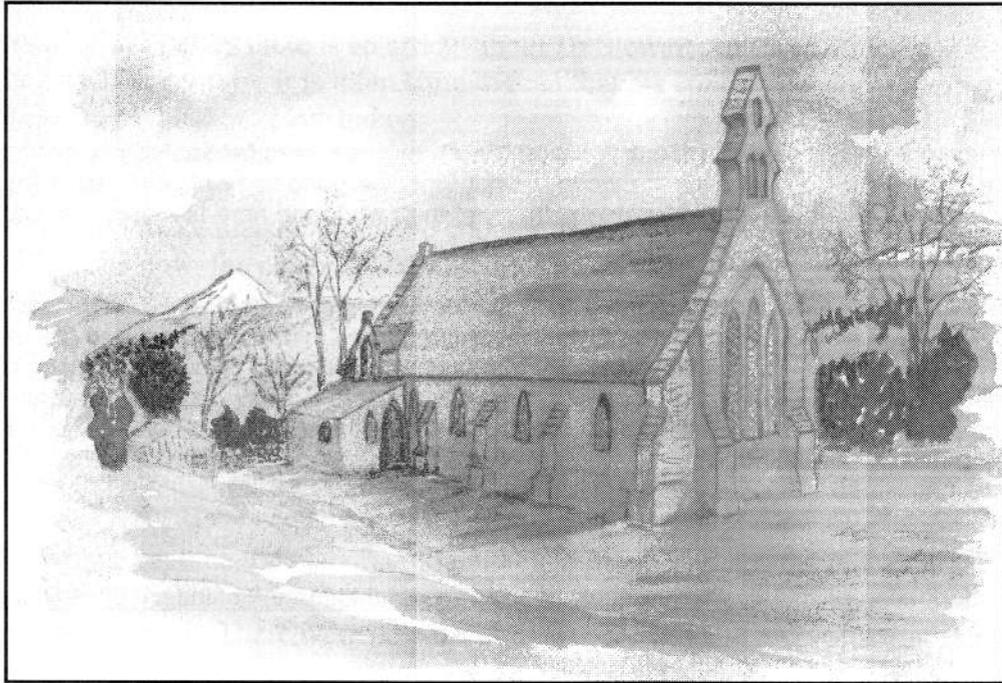
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A watercolour of Balquhider Church  
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The Fridge Magnet of Balquhider Kirk is priced at £3.99  
Please see page 13 to place an order

## Church News

The most significant Church news this year is the installation of a new boiler and repairs to the heating system which have resulted in a great improvement to the comfort of the congregation. We now have good heating in the Friendship Room as well. It is hoped that the improved efficiency of the new boiler will offset at least some of the increased cost of running it! Future work planned includes installation of a hearing loop system and alterations to a pew to improve wheelchair access.

Work to the Friendship Room which will soon be necessary is redecoration and treatment of damp affected walls, restoration of the information boards and replacement of the worn carpet. We shall need to undertake fund raising to help with this work so as not to deplete our reserves.

Readers may also like to know that Mrs Margaret Ritchie left the Church a generous legacy to set up an organ/piano fund. Many in the congregation hope that, in due course, we may be able to afford a modern replacement for the aged harmonium organ, possibly with an electronic organ. This would not replace the piano, but augment its use in Church services.

Jean Edwards (Church Treasurer)  
Balquhidder Parish Church Reg. Charity No. SCO12316

## New Item of Interest

We have available for sale a photocopy of the list of headstones in the Church graveyard covering dates up to 1855. Also, the 1694 Hearth Tax return and a note on the Burial Ground at the western end of Loch Doine. These lists were produced for a survey in 1964 for the Scottish Genealogy Society. Copies will be available from Rosphilda Crafts for £1.00, plus postage at cost.

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## Revd. Dr. Duncan Stewart

Minister at Balquhidder 1772-1804

We do not know a great deal about the personal lives of Ministers from way back, but recently, we received some information about the family of Revd. Duncan Stewart. His Ministry spanned very formative years in the history of Balquhidder glen and he is buried in Balquhidder Churchyard. He is remembered for putting the St Angus stone out of the 1631 Church, because he was angry at the superstitious tradition of parishioners standing on the stone for good luck when getting married! He wrote the chapter on the parish in the 1790 Statistical Account of Scotland where he described the physical characteristics, the road system, land tenure and cultivation etc. This was the period of the recommendations for land improvements following the reports on the Annexed Estates 1755-1769.

The comments by Revd. Stewart on the physique of men and women in the parish is often quoted. The men are a good height "tight and good looking" whereas the women are "not remarkable for their looks; they rather exceed their circumstance in dress before marriage."

I am not quite sure what the last remark means, but if it meant that they were too fashionable then it is clear that Balquhidder was not a complete backwater. Certainly, the Minister's two sons were well educated.

The new information about the Minister's family was passed on to us by Iain Fraser Grigor who presented a paper in June 2004 marking the bicentenary of the Haitian revolution. We were given an extract from it, which mostly focuses on the Scots in Haiti after 1804. Evidently, the King of Haiti had a personal physician who was a Scot, Dr Duncan Stewart of Edinburgh. It seems he was the second son of our Revd. Duncan Stewart and that he practised in London before moving to Haiti where he died in 1826, aged 43. He had an elder brother, Col. Alexander Stewart, who was in the army in India for many years. He apparently was unofficially married to an Indian woman with whom he had several children before he married Janetta Daniels!

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The final comment in the extract from the paper appealed to me: "Could it be that these two brothers, products of a strict Presbyterian upbringing in Balquhiddy by exceedingly pious parents, both cast off the shackles in these distant corners of the world."

Jean Edwards

Sources: Iain Fraser Grigor Paper on Haiti.  
Statistical Account of Scotland. 1790

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## The Friendship Room

Refurbishment of the Friendship Room is long overdue, and in recent months there have been increasing problems with damp. The main cause is lack of adequate heating, due to an inactive radiator and under-powered boiler. The Congregational Board has asked our Property Convener to obtain quotes to put this right.

The display boards and cabinets will be renovated, and some work on the cabinets is starting shortly. The glass shelves will be cleaned of mould and the items displayed will be checked and renovated as necessary. Silica gel crystals, as used in many museums these days, will be in place to combat damp.

The business of getting quotes and work done is always protracted, but we hope to give a progress report in the next issue of The Belfry.

Jean Edwards

## AGM Wednesday 13th August at 7.30

Balquhiddy Parish Church of Scotland is a Scottish Registered Charity  
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## The Stewarts of Balquhiddar Research Group

A group of descendants from around the globe working on the  
Genealogy of the Balquhiddar area

This has been created to help bring together independent researchers who researching Stewart families in the Balquhiddar area of Perthshire, Scotland during the 16th to 19th centuries. It was during this time period that emigration from Scotland was at an all time high. The Highlands were emptying and Stewarts of Balquhiddar were scattering across the globe. We are their descendants.

Chuck Speed and I met online while I was researching my ancestry through the Stewarts of Ardvorlich. Through our online connection we have been able to help each other with our family research. (Well, to be honest, Chuck has been the teacher and I've been a good student. \*s\*) In the course of our research we have bumped into other Balquhiddar Stewart researchers with whom we have exchanged research. It occurred to us that there are probably more of you out there like us who might benefit from an opportunity to share research. We have created this website as a means of connecting Balquhiddar Stewart researchers together.

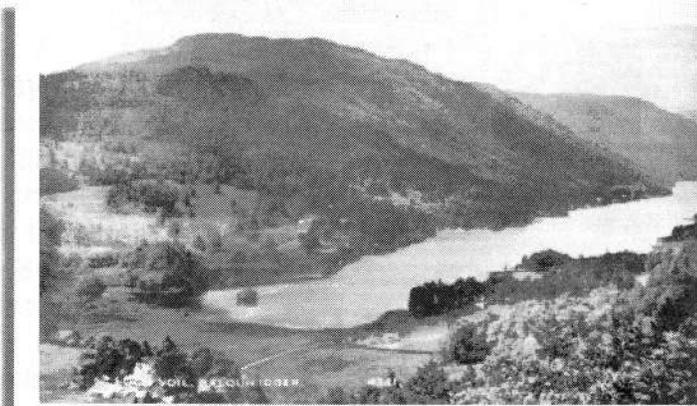
We are not experts, nor professional historians. We are fellow family history researchers and genealogists like you. We have each been able to trace our ancestry back to one of the Stewart families of the Balquhiddar area, so we are also distant cousins. Chuck and I met online during the summer of 2002

Chuck Speed is a retired former Human Resources Director for the City of Amarillo, Texas and Corpus Christi, Texas. He is a descendant of Patrick Stewart of Ledcreich who first immigrated from Ledcreich, Balquhiddar, Perthshire, Scotland to the Cape Fear area of the North Carolina colony in

Ryk Brown is a Presbyterian pastor from Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. He is descended from Robert Stewart of Comrie, Perthshire (born: 1775 in Balquhiddar) whose widow and ten children immigrated to Ontario, Canada in 1834. Robert Stewart is descended from the Stewarts of Dalveich, Lochearnside, cousins of the Stewarts of Ardvorlich.



## The Origins of the Balquhidder Stewarts



*Loch Voil, Balquhidder, 1937*

**The Stewarts of Glen Buckie, Gartnafuaran, Balquhidder, Ardvorlich, and Annat lived in the areas of Balquhidder Parish of Loch Voil and Loch Earn for over three hundred years (circa 1480-1780.) They were tacksmen or land holders under the Earls and Dukes of Atholl.**

The name Stewart is an occupational surname. It comes from the occupational title of "steward". A steward is a person who is responsible for looking after someone else's property. In the case of a large estate, the steward would essentially be the household or estate manager -- responsible for overseeing all the daily functions of the house & property and supervising all the staff.

The earliest provable ancestor of the Stewart line is Alan Fitz Flaad of Dol, a Breton knight from Dol, Bretagne (modern day Brittany, France). Alan came to England in 1066 as one of William the Conqueror's knights. Some historians mistakenly refer to Alan as Norman because he was part of the Norman conquest, however Alan was Breton, not Norman. The Normans were French speaking Norsemen, but the Bretons were Celts who spoke a Celtic language and were believed to be historically related to the ancient Welsh Bretons. So although the (future) Stewart line were part of the Norman ruling class, they were a Celtic people.



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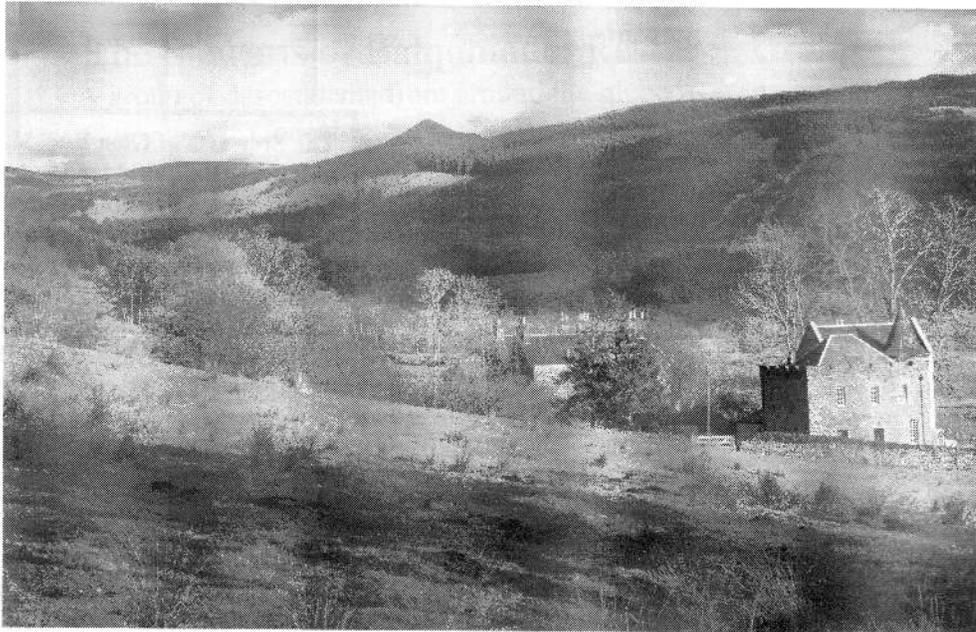
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**William Stewart of Baldorran lived during the late-15th century. He was the grandson of James Mohr Stewart, who was the only son of Murdoch Stewart, Duke of Albany, to survive the persecution of King James I in 1425. In 1490 William Stewart of Baldorran was appointed Royal Bailie of the Crown Lands of Balquhidder. William brought the Stewart name to Balquhidder. The Stewarts of Annat, Ardvorlich, Baldorran, Balquhidder, Gartnafueraran, Glenbuckie and Lednascriden are all descended from Wil-**

**Sir William STEWART , 2nd Laird Of Balindoran, 1st Royal Bailie of Balquhidder** b: ABT 1440 in Balindoran, Campsie, Stirlingshire, Scotland. William Stewart was appointed Royal Bailie of the Crown lands of Balquhidder sometime before 1488. William held the townships listed in the Exchequer Rolls of 1488 (listed below). In the Exchequer Rolls of 1502-1515 Sir William and his eldest son, Walter, are confirmed as Crown tenants in the Balquhidder lands and the lands of Estir and Westir Duchraa (these lands were also known as Innerquhawawane and Glenmaan) and Blarbaith.

The location of these lands has not been accurately identified, but they are described as forming "part of Glenfinglas" (Ardvorlich MSS).

It is believed that Glenmaan is the same as Glean nam Meann, which lands encompass the sheiling lands north of Glenfinglas and south of Glenbuckie. In the portioning of Balquhidder which took place during the sixteenth century, the descendants of Sir William Stewart of Baldorran gained hereditary tacks of land.

Sir William held the Crown rentals for the following lands in Balquhidder, Strathyre and Glenfinglas. According to The Settlements of Western Perthshire, these lands were all small Baile settlements.

There was nothing in Balquhidder that would be as large as what we would think of as even a village.

Sir William married firstly before 1 May 1484 to Janet BUCHANAN, daughter of Archibald Buchanan Of Lettir (in Strathyre). MacGregor notes a charter by Archibald de Buchannan for the lands of Lettir on 1 May, 1484. Buchanan of Auchamar History states the following: "James' successor was Walter Stewart of Baldorrans, as is clear by charter, in his favour, by Janet Boquhuanan, of a wadset-right the said Janet had upon a part of the lands of Straithyre, of date in the year 1528."

This reference is problematic as it is clear that Auchmar is partially in error, but how much in error. James was succeeded by William, not Walter and Janet Buchanan is believed to have died before Walter was born and long before 1528. It is suggested that Auchmar may be citing the same reference as MacGregor, but with the wrong date and substituting Walter in place of William. The lands in Strathyre are believed to have also included Creaggan.

Sir William appears to have established his brothers in the lands of Gartnafuaran and Garroquhill and his younger son John in Glenbuckie. William's eldest son, Walter, inherited the Baillieship and the lands of Baldorran. In the year 1500, Walter Stewart is named as his father's heir for the lands of Duchlas (believed to be the same as Duchraa), with John Stewart in Glenbuckie named as heir-substitute.

Sir William Stewart and Janet Buchanan had the following daughters:

**Janet STEWART** , Of Lettir b: ABT 1475 in Baldorran, Campsie, Stirlingshire, Scotland. She was cited in a charter by William Stewart of Balindoran of the lands of Lettir in favour of Janet Stewart his daughter on 4 July, 1493 (presumably as a marriage dowry). She married presumably about 1493 to John KINROSS , Of Kippenross.

**Agnese STEWART** b: ABT 1477 in Baldorran, Campsie, Stirlingshire, Scotland  
Sir William married secondly before 1498 to Marion Helen CAMPBELL , Of Glenorchy, daughter of Colin Campbell, 1st of Glenorchy, and by whom he had the following children:

**Walter STEWART , 3rd Laird Of Baldorran, 2nd Bailie of Balquhiddier,**  
b: ABT 1480 in Baldorran, Campsie, Stirlingshire, Scotland.

**John STEWART , 1st Laird Of Glenbuckie** b: ABT 1485 in Baldorran, Campsie, Stirlingshire, Scotland.

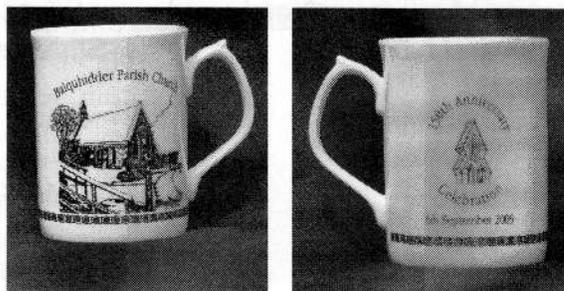
**Mariote STEWART** b: ABT 1490 in Baldorran, Campsie, Stirlingshire, Scotland. Mariote's birth date and mother are uncertain. She could be the daughter of William's first marriage.

## BALQUHIDDER SUMMER MUSIC PROGRAMME 2008

All concerts are on Sundays, at 7pm. In Balquhiddier Parish Church.

- 29 th June DIECI. Eight vocal studies students from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. A return visit after their very Successful 2007 concert in Balquhiddier
- 6th July Cartha Trio (Clarinet, Viola/violin, piano). The clarinettist is Alan Bacchetti who played the Mozart Clarinet Qunitet in a 2007 Balquhiddier concert with the Alba Quartet.
- 13th July Djordje Gajic, a young and brilliant accordionist with a Repertoire of classical and not-so-classical music.
- 20th July Amici Cello Trio. Three professional cellists, beautiful music.
- 27th July Primrose Piano Quartet (violin, viola, cello, piano). Programme Will include a new work by Orkney-based composer Peter Maxwell Davies.
- 3rd August Slide Effect. A trombone quartet, all from Scottish orchestras, With an enjoyable and mixed repertoire.

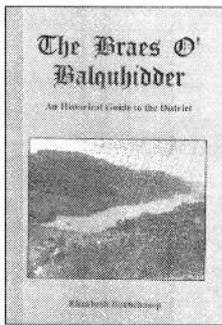
Details will appear on posters and fliers at the beginning of May. If you would like to Be included in the mailing list, please contact Alan Clarke, the Chairman of Balquhiddier Summer Music: Telephone 01877 384338  
Email [alan@tullochlodge.co.uk](mailto:alan@tullochlodge.co.uk)



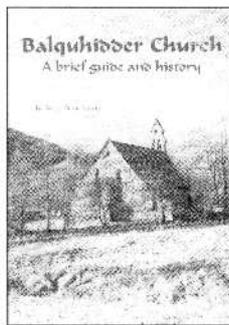
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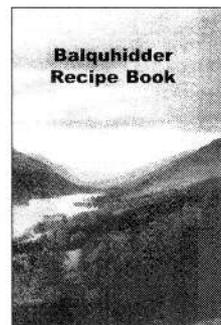
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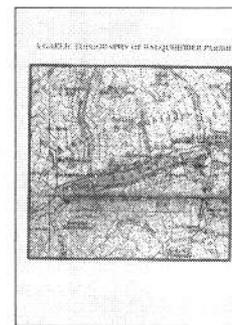
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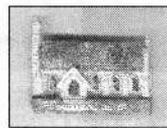
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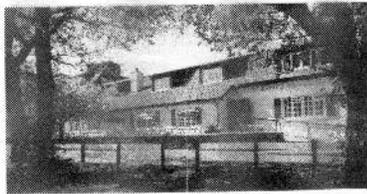
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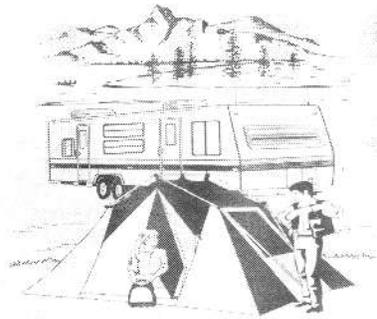
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## FRIENDS OF BALQUHIDDER CHURCH ASSOCIATION

The parish of Balquhiddar, which covers the villages of Balquhiddar, Strathyre and Lochearnhead, lies in one of the most beautiful areas of Scotland. It is blessed with lochs and mountains, rivers and glens and extends from Loch Lubnaig in the south to Loch Earn in the north. To the west, the parish reaches the mountains beyond Inverlochlarig.

Bronze Age relics tell us that the area has been inhabited for at least 4,000 years. Christianity was brought into Balquhiddar by Saint Angus, possibly in the 7th or 8th century. He lived in the low-lying lands by the river at Kirkton of Balquhiddar and was buried on the hill overlooking the site. Eventually a little church, "Eaglais Beag", was built over his grave and it is believed that Abbot Laurin from the monastic settlement at Cuilt in Balquhiddar was responsible for its construction. Clan MacLaren, the first recorded clan to have lived in the Glen, took its name from Abbot Laurin.

In 1631, David Murray, Lord Scone, built another church alongside Eaglais Beag. This incorporated part of the original little church and Rob Roy MacGregor is buried in what was once the chancel of the first church. David Carnegie of Stronvar gave the parish its present church in 1855 when Lord Scone's earlier building was suffering badly from damp and fungus (always a problem in Balquhiddar!). The architect was David Bryce. The ruin of the 1631 church still stands, adding to the attraction of the site.

Every year the church is visited by thousands of people from all over the world. Some of them are descendents of the many who left the parish to live overseas during hard times. Many visitors come to see the lands of their clans - for here lived MacLarens, Stewarts, MacGregors and Fergussons - while others come simply to enjoy the exceptional beauty of the area.

*If you are a visitor to Perthshire and have enjoyed the beauty and tranquility of Balquhiddar Parish, keep in touch with us by joining the Friends of Balquhiddar Church. Application form below.*

### THE AIMS OF THE FRIENDS OF BALQUHIDDER CHURCH ASSOCIATION

- The safeguarding of the amenity of the parish church and the beautifying of its surroundings
- The adornment and equipment of the parish church and its further endowment
- The support and encouragement of music in the parish church
- The encouragement of research into the history and worship of the parish
- To assist in providing information relating to the display of objects of historical interest of Balquhiddar Church and parish
- To undertake the publication of a newsletter suitable for distribution among members at home and abroad
- To provide a focal point for the attraction of visitors to Lochearnhead, Strathyre and Balquhiddar

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

**Note:** Subscriptions, apart from Life subscriptions, are due for renewal on 1st January each year (except in your first year if you joined in the last six months of the previous year.)

Membership Category :	Individual	Family	Junior (under 18)	Corporate	Life
Subscription:	£7.00/\$20	£15.00/\$40	£3.00/\$10	£20/\$50	£100/\$250

(Cheques should be made payable to: The Friends of Balquhiddar Church Association)

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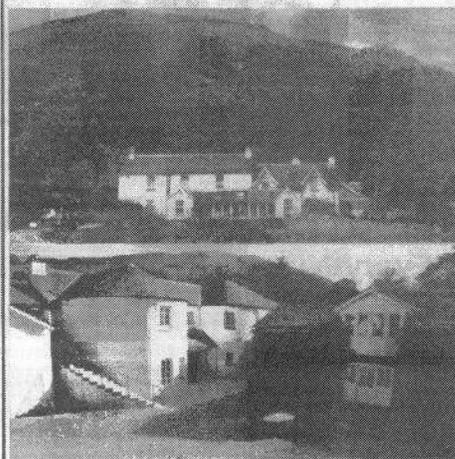
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